

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6569

As Passed Senate, February 16, 2008

Title: An act relating to public transit vehicle stops at unmarked stop zones.

Brief Description: Permitting public transit vehicle stops at unmarked stop zones under certain circumstances.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Swecker, Hatfield and Holmquist).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/05/08, 2/07/08 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/16/08, 47-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6569 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Benton, Berkey, Delvin, Holmquist, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, King, Pflug, Sheldon and Spanel.

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current law, it is generally a traffic infraction to stop, park, or leave standing any vehicle upon the roadway in an unincorporated area, whether attended or not. However, exceptions to this rule are specified for: (1) the driver of any vehicle that is disabled such that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving the vehicle; (2) the driver of a public transit vehicle who temporarily stops the vehicle in order to receive and discharge passengers at a marked transit vehicle stop zone; and (3) the driver of a solid waste collection company who temporarily stops the vehicle as far to the right as practical in order to collect solid waste or recyclables.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Public transportation service providers, including certain nonprofit organizations, may allow the driver of a transit vehicle to stop upon a roadway in an unincorporated area momentarily to receive or discharge passengers at an unmarked stop zone. However, the driver must: (1) stop the vehicle as far to the right side of the roadway as is practicable so as to not significantly impede traffic; (2) activate four-way flashing lights; and (3) stop at a portion of the highway with an unobstructed view for drivers approaching from behind the transit vehicle.

Appropriation: None.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: There are fewer people in rural parts of the state; therefore, it is difficult to structure service areas appropriately. Flag stops provide a way to serve transit passengers in those areas. Flag stops are usually made in safe areas in slower speed zones. Bus drivers always conduct safe flag stops. This bill offers a good way to get pedestrians off of highways that have no sidewalks. However, there is a concern that flag stops be conducted safely, such that drivers can anticipate bus stops in unmarked areas.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dave O'Connell, Mason Transit; Angela Barbie, Community Transportation Association of the Northwest; Tim Russ, Pacific Transit; Peter Thein, Washington State Transit Association.; Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.